



# *Ocean County Office of Senior Services*

*September 2011 Newsletter*



## **A Message From Joe Vicari: Freeholder Chairman SEPTEMBER IS HEALTHY AGING MONTH**

The Ocean County Office of Senior Services administers the HealthEASE program in Ocean County which serves older adults at all levels of the health spectrum, from those experiencing no health issues to those with multiple chronic health challenges. Research proven HealthEASE programs include self-management of on-going illnesses, non-aerobic exercise, walking, mind-body connection, health education, health screenings and volunteer opportunities.

Our office also coordinates the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). SHIP is designed to assist Medicare enrollees, potential enrollees and caregivers with their questions regarding Part A, B, C and D benefits/claims and supplemental policies; this is one of the most frequently used services in our department.

A number of changes benefiting Medicare recipients have occurred this year including increased preventative services, coverage of annual wellness visits, and increased relief in the Part D coverage gap. So if you're in the donut hole, there are discounts on brand name prescription drugs to help you stay healthy. Use your benefits and have peace of mind knowing you are taking good care of your health.

Everyone with Medicare can now get a yearly wellness visit that gives you a chance to talk with your doctor to make sure you are getting the right prescriptions and care.

These Preventive Services can find health problems early when treatment works best and can keep you from getting diseases. These services include exams, shots, lab tests and screenings. They can also include programs for health monitoring, counseling and education to help you take care of your own health.

Help us spread the word! Please tell your friends and family with Medicare about the difference these benefits can make.

**When you share the news, you share the health!**

*The One-Stop Center  
1027 Hooper Ave., Bldg. 2, First Floor  
(732) 929-2091 • 1-877-222-3737 • 1-800-668-4899*

## **MEDICARE PART D OPEN ENROLLMENT FAST APPROACHING**

### ***Prescription Drug Plan Enrollment Runs October 15 to December 7***

Once again, it's time for Ocean County's Medicare beneficiaries to make a decision about their prescription drug coverage. Medicare Part D, the federal program's prescription drug benefit. Open enrollment begins on Oct. 15 and runs through Dec. 7. During this enrollment period, people with Medicare can sign up for a prescription drug plan (PDP) or switch their current Medicare Part D plan.

State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), is available to help seniors and other Medicare beneficiaries with the enrollment process or answer any questions about the program. Trained SHIP counselors are available to meet with you face-to-face to answer your questions Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

SHIP created the following frequently asked questions to guide you through the Part D enrollment process.

If you have additional questions, call us at **1-800-668-4899** or visit [www.co.ocean.nj.us](http://www.co.ocean.nj.us).

#### **What is a Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan (PDP)?**

Medicare PDP's are insurance plans approved by Medicare and sold by private insurance companies that offer prescription drug coverage to people with Medicare. All people on Medicare are eligible to enroll into a Medicare PDP regardless of their income or assets. Medicare PDP's work like any other insurance products; they have premiums, co-payments, deductibles and formularies (list of approved drugs that the plan will cover).

#### **What if I cannot afford a Medicare PDP?**

There is federal assistance available for people with Medicare who have limited income and resources. If you qualify, you can receive assistance with premiums, deductibles and prescription co-payments.

To apply for the Low Income Subsidy (LIS) program call the Social Security Administration at **1-800-772-1213**, visit [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or contact the Office of Senior Services for help, **1-800-668-4899**.

#### **Should I change my current PDP?**

Many Medicare PDP's change their formularies and prices every year, so it is possible that the PDP you chose for 2011 won't work as well for you in 2012. Just like with any insurance product, it's important to make sure that your coverage continues to meet your needs year after year. By comparing plans, you can see if another Medicare PDP would save you money and/or cover more of your prescriptions. Start your comparisons now so that there is plenty of time to shop around before making your decision. If you do sign up for Part D or change your current plan during the open enrollment, Oct. 15 – Dec. 7, your new plan will take effect on Jan. 1, 2012.

## **What other options are available for Medicare prescription drug coverage?**

Some Medicare Advantage plans contain prescription drug coverage. If you have questions about Medicare Advantage plans, contact us for assistance.

## **MEDICARE PART D DAYS AT THE COUNTY CONNECTION**

Ocean County Office of Senior Services will have representatives available for **one-on-one** assistance in comparing the Medicare Prescription Drug Plans for 2011 on the Medicare Plan Finder.

**You must** call the County Connection at **732-288-7777** to register. **Registration is required.**

<b>Wed., October 19, 2011</b> Time: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	<b>Wed., November 9, 2011</b> Time: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
<b>Tues., October 25, 2011</b> Time: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	<b>Fri., November 18, 2011</b> Time: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
<b>Thurs., October 27, 2011</b> Time: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	<b>Mon., November 28, 2011</b> Time: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
<b>Tues., November 1, 2011</b> Time: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	<b>Thurs., December 1, 2011</b> Time: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
<b>Fri., November 4, 2011</b> Time: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	

The Office of Senior Services will sponsor Free Medicare Part D Educational Seminars addressing the 2012 changes.

The seminars are free and open to the public. For more information and to register, please call the Office of Senior Services at **732-929-2091, 1-800-668-4899 or 1-877-222-3737.**

### **October 18, 2011**

Manchester Civic Center  
1 Colonial Drive  
Manchester, NJ 08759  
9:30 am to 11:30 am

### **October 18, 2011**

Original Leisure Village  
Dorchester Hall  
718 Buckingham Drive  
Lakewood, NJ 08701  
1:30 pm to 3:30 pm



**Ocean County Office of Senior Services-NJ EASE Access Site**  
**The One-Stop Center**  
**P.O. Box 2191**  
**1027 Hooper Ave., Bldg. 2, First Floor**  
**Toms River, New Jersey 08754-2191**



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Ocean County  
Office of Senior Services

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Beach Haven, NJ 08008

**Joseph H. Vicari, Freeholder**  
**Chairman**  
**D. Jane Maloney, Director**

[www.co.ocean.nj.us](http://www.co.ocean.nj.us)

*"Making it Easier For Seniors To Choose Services"*

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## MAKING CHOICES FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE

The 2010 census information shows Ocean County's 60+ population at 27.2% of the total with 157,064 individuals. The 65+ age group represents 21% of the total with 121,104. The eighty-five and over population numbers 19,610. We are committed to providing programs and services at all stages of the aging continuum to support "Healthy Aging."; if you would like further information or wish to schedule a presentation regarding ways you can Make Choices for a Healthier Future, please call 732-929-2091, 1-800-668-4899.



*We Will Never Forget:*  
*September 11, 2001*